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27 August 1953

SUBJECT: Soviet Military Transportation Capability

031182

CIA TSC NO.

TO: Director of Central Intelligence
2430 E Street, N.W.,
Washington 25, D. C.

281180

1. It is important to a study to be undertaken by the Weapons Systems Evaluation Group in the near future that the Group be provided with current agreed estimates of the Soviet Bloc's 1955-56 military transportation capability, in the absence of interference with the systems of transportation, to launch and support offensive operations in Europe west of the Iron Curtain.
2. The primary interest of WSEG is centered on the Soviet capability to launch and support campaigns into the area between the Baltic Sea and the Alps. The communications zone for which the east-west transportation capacity estimates are required is bounded by the borders of the USSR on the east, by the southern boundaries of Romania, Hungary, Austria and Switzerland on the south, by the Rhine River line on the west, and by and including appropriate use of the Baltic Sea on the north.
3. Estimates are required of the total military transportation capacity - rail, road, sea and inland waterways, both for sustained periods and for shorter periods of the order of thirty days in duration. These estimates should take into account the fact that all military loads need not necessarily originate in the USSR; some might originate within the communications zone itself.
4. Estimates of the general type described, for dates varying from 1952 to 1955, have been prepared by several agencies in the last two years. Estimates made for the same period, for the same regions, and assuming essentially the same transportation systems have differed widely, both

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Army review(s) completed.

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Ltr to Director, CIA, subj: "Soviet Military Transportation Capability," 27 Aug 53 - Cont'd

as to over-all conclusions and as to detailed breakdowns of capacity, either by region or by type of transportation system. For example, a recent Central Intelligence Agency provisional report ("Railroad Transport Capabilities Between the Soviet Frontier and Western Europe," CIA-RR-31, 27 May 53, SECRET) contains estimates of capacities of five principal through railroads crossing Poland which yield a total maximum sustained capacity for rail transport alone of 126,000 metric tons (138,500 short tons) each way per day. A Department of the Army study (Project No. 6944, "Estimate of East-West Transportation Capacity in Europe," 18 Feb 52, SECRET) of the same lines in the same region yields an estimate of only 62,000 metric tons (68,200 short tons) each way per day. Estimates contained in a Joint Intelligence Committee document (JIC 636/2, 16 Jun 52, "Study on Maximum Number of Soviet Divisions Which Could be Employed for an Attack on Western Europe - 1954," TOP SECRET) indicate that the total estimated Soviet Bloc transportation capacity for the support of a campaign against Western Europe in 1954 is 84,000 short tons per day on a sustained basis. The Department of the Army study gives a total sustained capacity of 110,000 short tons per day.

5. It is requested that current discrepancies in estimates of Soviet Bloc transportation capabilities to present zonal boundary for the launching and support of military campaigns in Western Europe be resolved, and that a study be undertaken to provide agreed estimates for this area. In addition, estimates for Soviet Bloc transportation capabilities for the expanded area to the Rhine River, as described in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 above, are required. The Economic Intelligence Committee would appear to be the appropriate organization to resolve these differences. In order for this study to be of maximum usefulness to WSEQ it should be available by 31 December 1953.

GEOFFREY KEYES
Lieutenant General, USA
Director

cc: C/S, USA
Attn: Chief of Transportation

JHLewis/as/76798

Capt. Mustin _____
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